

CHARLES A. TINDLEY ACCELERATED SCHOOL

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT #3 DETAILED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT & PROFILE



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This supplemental report presents information about the school in three sections:

- Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School's Students (enrollment and demographic information)
- Performance at Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School
- Detailed Description of Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School's Programs and Activities
(as provided by the school)

2005



CHARLES A. TINDLEY ACCELERATED SCHOOL

DETAILED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT & PROFILE

STUDENTS

Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School

A ENROLLMENT AND DEMAND

	2004-05	At Capacity
Grades served	8-9	7-12
Maximum possible enrollment, pursuant to charter	160	400
Number of students enrolled ¹	138	N/A
Number of students on waiting list ²	15	N/A

¹Source: Indiana Department of Education website, based on school's Pupil Enrollment Count reported every October. ■ ²Source: School self-report of data, as of August 1, 2005. ■ N/A denotes "Not Applicable." A school may elect to maintain a smaller overall enrollment than that allowed by its Charter with the Mayor's Office. Actual enrollment may exceed the maximum enrollment stated in the Charter by 10%. It is possible that a school may have a waiting list but not be fully enrolled because waiting list figures are aggregated across grades; some grades may be fully enrolled and have waiting lists while others do not.

Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School

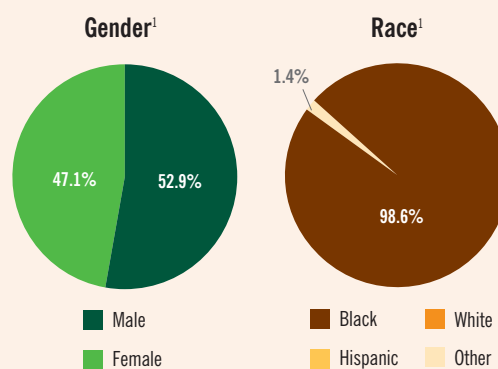
C STUDENTS PASSING ISTEP+ TESTS At the Beginning of the Fall Semester

	English '04	Math '04	Both (English & Math) '04	Science '04
8th Graders	45%	40%	32%	
9th Graders	52%	28%	27%	

Source: Indiana Department of Education. ■ See page 9 in the main report for statewide data. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number. Blank areas denote that Indiana did not offer a particular subject test in that grade for that year; or there were no students in the applicable grade in this school at the time of testing.

Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School

B STUDENT COMPOSITION



Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School	
Free/Reduced-Price Lunch ²	64.8%
Special Education ³	6.5%
Limited English Proficiency ⁴	0.0%

¹Source: Indiana Department of Education website, based on school's Pupil Enrollment Count reported every October. ■ ²Source: School self-report of data. The Indiana Department of Education website lists free and reduced-price lunch data only for schools who reported this information in October 2004. This school did not report free and reduced price lunch data to the Indiana Department of Education in October 2004; the Mayor's Office thus collected this information directly from the school for November 2004, the closest time period for which the school has this information. ■ ³Source: Indiana Department of Education Division of Exceptional Learners, count reported December 2004. ■ ⁴Source: Indiana Department of Education Division of Language and Minority Programs, count reported March 2005. ■ See main report for comparative data.

PERFORMANCE

The section below describes Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School's (CTAS) performance over its first school year by addressing the common performance indicators in the Mayor's Charter School Performance Framework. The complete Performance Framework may be viewed

on-line at <http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Accountability/2005/home.htm>.

The Mayor's Office conducts evaluations of school performance using a variety of measurement tools, including visits by a multi-member site evaluation team,

independent surveys of parents and staff, and expert analysis of standardized test score data. Each section of the following text notes the specific tools used. Supplemental Report 12 contains a complete description of evaluation mechanisms used to prepare this report.

IS THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM A SUCCESS?

IS THE SCHOOL MAKING ADEQUATE YEARLY ACADEMIC PROGRESS, AS MEASURED BY THE INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY?

Performance on the statewide assessment

Though CTAS students took the state's ISTEP+ exams, they did so shortly after the school opened at the beginning of the school year. As a result, the school's results on the state tests reflect students' starting levels of academic achievement

rather than the school's performance. Because these scores do not reflect the success of the school's educational program, they are not included under this performance question. See **CHART C** for information about the school's ISTEP+ scores in fall 2004.

Adequate Yearly Progress

Information about Adequate Yearly Progress is not available for this school because it just completed its first year of operation.

ARE STUDENTS MAKING ADEQUATE AND SUBSTANTIAL GAINS OVER TIME?

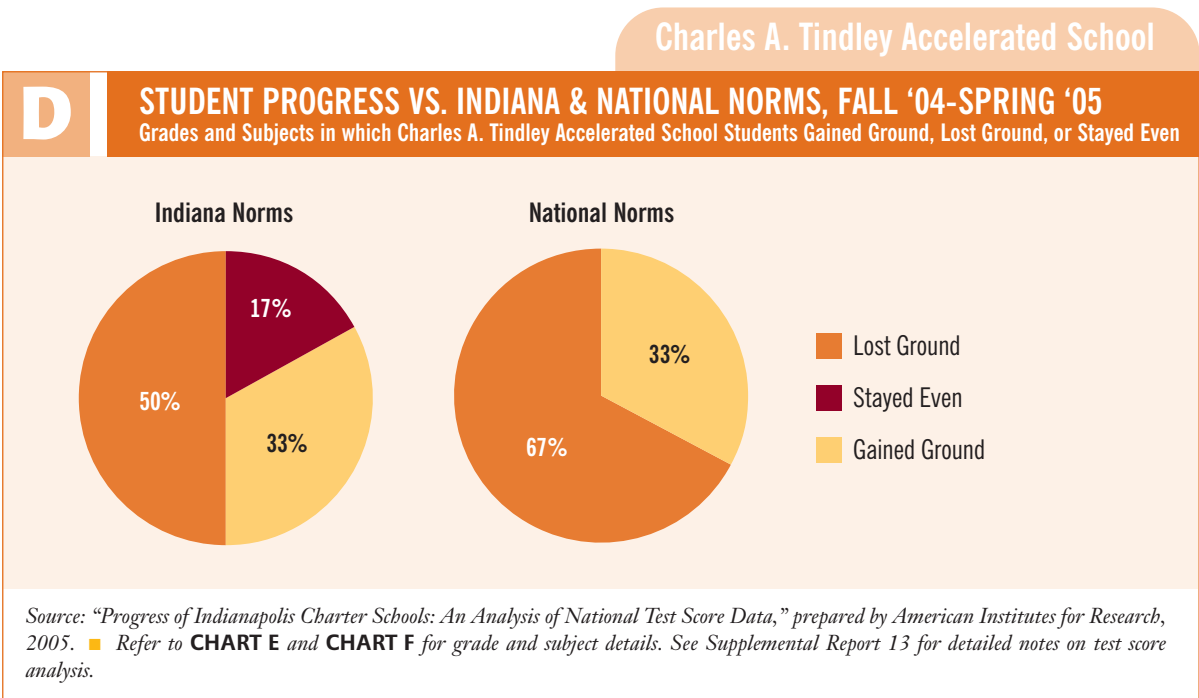
Charter schools administered the highly-regarded Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test in reading, math, and language in both the fall and the spring. American Institutes for Research (AIR), a major nonprofit research organization, analyzed the results for the Mayor's Office to determine whether students gained ground, lost ground, or stayed even relative to their peers nationally and in Indiana over the course of the 2004-05

academic year. Because NWEA does not publish proficiency levels for high school grades, it was not possible for AIR to examine what proportion of students in this school made sufficient progress to reach proficiency over time.

Comparative Gains: How much did Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School students improve relative to their peers?

AIR was able to compare the average gains of students at CTAS with those of

students across Indiana (**CHART E**) and the US (**CHART F**). The figures show where CTAS students gained ground, lost ground, or stayed even relative to their peers. As the pie charts below show, CTAS students gained ground relative to their Indiana and national peers in two out of six (33%) grades and subjects (**CHART D**).



Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School

E

ACADEMIC PROGRESS OF STUDENTS

Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School vs. Indiana Norms (IN), Fall 2004 Through Spring 2005

Grade/Subject	Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School Gains vs. IN Gains		Gained or Lost Ground		
	School Gains	IN Gains	Gained Ground	Stayed Even	Lost Ground
8th Grade Math	2.6	7.0			-4.4
8th Grade Reading	0.9	4.1			-3.2
8th Grade Language	3.3	3.2		0.1 ¹	
9th Grade Math	0.5	6.2			-5.7
9th Grade Reading	5.4	1.6	3.8		
9th Grade Language	3.9	2.0	1.9		

How to Read this Figure: The first row, as an example, under the Grade/Subject column is 8th grade math. The numbers in that row show that 8th grade students at CTAS made an average gain of 2.6 points, compared to 7.0 points for the average IN student. These students “lost ground” compared to the average IN student because their average gains were 4.4 points lower.

Source: “Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data,” prepared by American Institutes for Research, 2005. ■ Students are said to have “gained ground” or “lost ground” if their average growth differed from that of the norm group to a statistically significant degree. See Supplemental Report 13 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

■ ¹The t-test used to determine the statistical significance of all gains and losses showed that there was no significant difference between the average gains for 8th grade language at CTAS and the average gains recorded across Indiana.

Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School

F

ACADEMIC PROGRESS OF STUDENTS

Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School vs. National Norms (US), Fall 2004 Through Spring 2005

Grade/Subject	Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School Gains vs. US Gains		Gained or Lost Ground		
	School Gains	US Gains	Gained Ground	Stayed Even	Lost Ground
8th Grade Math	2.6	7.1			-4.5
8th Grade Reading	0.9	4.2			-3.3
8th Grade Language	3.3	3.5			-0.2
9th Grade Math	0.5	5.8			-5.3
9th Grade Reading	5.4	2.9	2.5		
9th Grade Language	3.9	2.4	1.5		

How to Read this Figure: The first row, as an example, under the Grade/Subject column is 8th grade math. The numbers in that row show that 8th grade students at CTAS made an average gain of 2.6 points, compared to 7.1 points for the average US student. These students “lost ground” compared to the average US student because their average gains were 4.5 points lower.

Source: “Progress of Indianapolis Charter Schools: An Analysis of National Test Score Data,” prepared by American Institutes for Research, 2005. ■ Students are said to have “gained ground” or “lost ground” if their average growth differed from that of the norm group to a statistically significant degree. See Supplemental Report 13 for detailed notes on test score analysis.

IS THE ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVE AND WELL-RUN?

Is the school in sound fiscal health?

The Mayor’s Office commissioned an outside accounting firm to review each school’s finances. The accounting firm reported that CTAS managed its financial practices satisfactorily during the past year, with no significant problems. Supplemental Report 11 contains financial statements and a summary of the school’s finances.

Are the school’s student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?

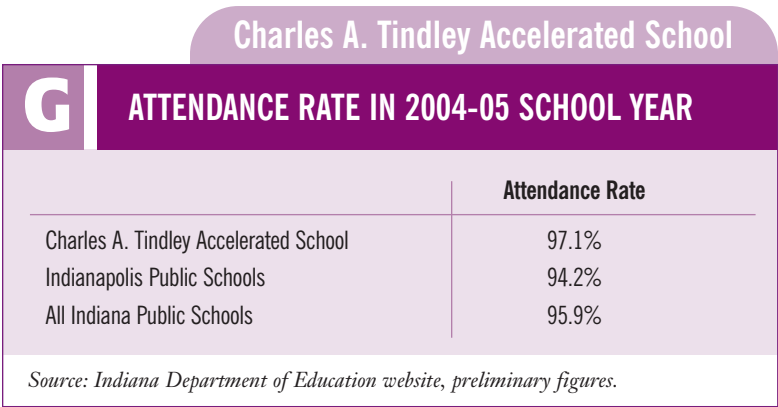
The school’s attendance rate was 97.1% in 2004-05 (■ **CHART G**). Several staff interviewed by the site team, however, reported noteworthy attrition at the school. The staff members reported that the attrition may be because the school is specifically designed for students who “exert very high levels of discipline,” “focus,” and “effort.”

Is the school’s Board active and competent in its oversight?

Governance reviews conducted by the Mayor’s Office in 2004-05 revealed that the school’s Board provided exceptional support for the school’s administrators in 2004-05, particularly in the area of fundraising. The Board also devoted significant time and energy to holding the school accountable for its performance. Observations at Board meetings showed that the Board is actively engaged in activities at CTAS and is dedicated to the school’s success. In 2004-05, the CTAS Board was scheduled to meet monthly. According to the governance reviews conducted by the Mayor’s Office, the Board met each month even though the scheduled dates of the meetings were changed for three meetings. The Board did not, however, have a quorum at four meetings. As a result, minutes for those

meetings were not kept. The Board must ensure that meetings are made open to the public and that meeting notices are posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, particularly if the date of a meeting has changed.

According to the expert site visit team, Board meetings generally are characterized by clear agendas, and address both routine items and new business. The team suggested that the Board consider adding parent (and potentially student) representatives.



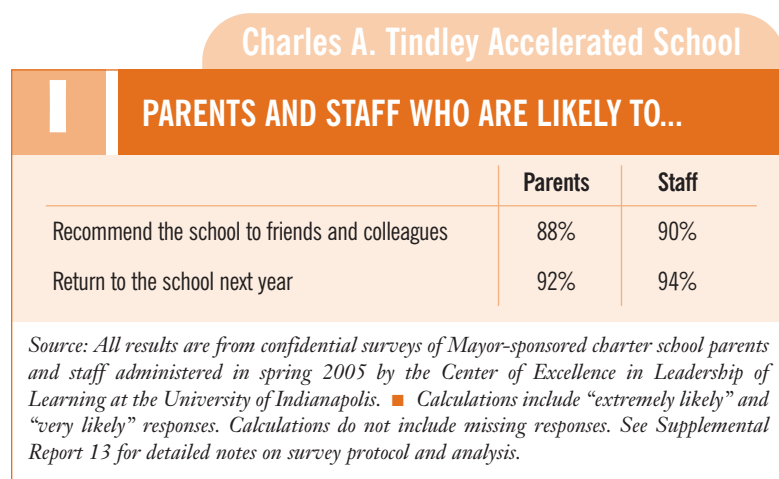
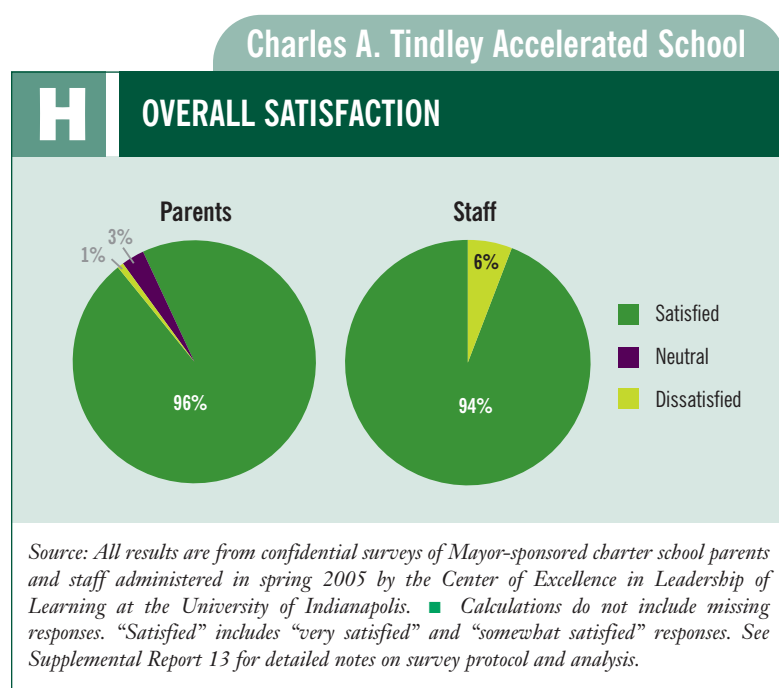
Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?

As shown in ■ **CHART H**, 96% of CTAS parents reported they were satisfied overall with the school. In addition, 88% of parents stated that they are likely to recommend the school to others, and 92% plan on returning to the school next year. CTAS staff surveyed also indicated that they are likely to recommend the school to others (90%) and virtually all (94%) planned to return the following year (■ **CHART I**).

■ **CHART J** shows how well parents and staff rated specific features of the school. The top-rated features for both parents and staff are highlighted in blue; the lowest-rated features are highlighted in crimson. When asked about the overall quality of education, 88% of parents and 89% of staff rated the school as “excellent” or “very good.” Both parents and staff at CTAS gave the highest ratings to the same features: opportunities for parental involvement and school size. Likewise,

both groups gave their lowest rating to the school’s transportation services.

In the expert site team’s focus groups, parents reported high levels of satisfaction and support for the school. The team found that parents see how their children benefit from attending CTAS, describing their children as “learning academically,” “being more focused,” “disciplined,” and “hard working,” and having “confidence in their ability to learn.”



Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School

J

PARENTS AND STAFF EVALUATION

Excellent/Very Good Responses of Select Features

	Parents	Staff
Overall quality of education	88%	89%
Quality of teaching/instruction	77%	67%
Curriculum/academic program	88%	79%
Individualized student attention	80%	58%
Access to/use of computers and other technologies	72%	63%
School material and supplies	63%	53%
Classroom management	65%	42%
Student-teacher ratio/class size	87%	84%
Services provided to special needs students ¹	53%	41%
Support services (e.g., counseling, healthcare, inc.)	50%	39%
Opportunities for parental involvement	91%	83%
Communication about student learning/achievement	85%	74%
Communication about meeting the school's mission	77%	72%
Teacher professional development	77%	44%
Faculty/teachers	76%	56%
School administration	81%	74%
School board	62%	72%
School facilities	79%	79%
Food service	73%	79%
Transportation services	23%	10%
Enrollment/admission process	70%	47%
School size	88%	84%
School safety	75%	74%
School location	56%	53%

■ Highest Percentages of Excellent/Very Good Responses

■ Lowest Percentages of Excellent/Very Good Responses

Source: All results are from confidential surveys of Mayor-sponsored charter school parents and staff administered in spring 2005 by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis. ■ Individual features with the highest percentage of excellent/very good responses are highlighted in blue; features with the lowest percentage of excellent/very good responses are highlighted in crimson. "Excellent" and "very good" responses are on a five-point scale (scale also includes "good," "fair," and "poor"). Calculations do not include missing and "don't know" responses. See Supplemental Report 13 for detailed notes on survey protocol and analysis. ■ ¹Special needs students include those for whom English is a second language or who have disabilities, academic difficulties, etc.

Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?

According to the Mayor's Office governance review, the CTAS administration was very successful in creating a culture of academic excellence in 2004-05. Students were engaged in academic activities and demonstrated an understanding of the school's mission and vision. However, the school experienced significant student attrition in 2004-05.

For 2005-06, the school should work on retaining more of the students who enroll.

The expert site visit team commended CTAS for its "exemplary administrative staff and structure that is aligned with the school's academic mission." The site visit team also noted that the school has a "strong, competent, active, knowledgeable, and involved Board."

Parent focus groups conducted by the site visit team also mentioned the staff's dedication and commitment. In the

groups, parents remarked that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is highly regarded as a dedicated school leader – "a man on a mission." Parents also stated that they had never seen a more dedicated staff, with strong male role models present throughout the school.

The site team expressed concern that the school's committed staff may find it difficult to sustain their first-year level of effort, and recommended that the school consider ways to ensure a "reasonable investment of time and energy" for the staff.

IS THE SCHOOL MEETING ITS OPERATIONS AND ACCESS OBLIGATIONS RELATED TO:

organizational structure and governance obligations; physical plants that are safe and conducive to learning; fair and appropriate pupil enrollment processes; reasonable and safe transportation options available to eligible students; and legal obligations related to access and services to special needs and English as a second language students?

CTAS satisfactorily met its obligations in 2004-05 in complying with relevant laws and regulations and in providing access to students across Indianapolis. Neither the Mayor's Office's internal systems nor the expert site visit team indicated any significant concerns related to these obligations.

In 2004-05, CTAS did, however, experience some challenges in satisfying reporting and compliance requirements. The school did not submit the first report of Average Daily Membership (ADM) to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) in a timely manner. The hard copy of the report was received by the IDOE several days after its due date. Additionally, the report of Average Daily Attendance was due in October 2004 and was not submitted to the IDOE until April 2005. The DOE's Pupil Enrollment report (DOE-PE), due at the end of October, was not submitted until mid-January. The second report of ADM was due mid-December but was not submitted until mid-January. Finally, the

Form 9 Biannual Financial report for the first half of 2004 was submitted in November 2004, more than one month after the October deadline.

Moreover, the school did not make quarterly payments into the Public Employees Retirement Fund (PERF) on a timely basis during the school year. The school had not resolved the payment issue by the end of its fiscal year, and the PERF accounts for CTAS employees were delinquent for the mid-July deadline for fourth quarter payments. In addition, the school experienced difficulty in ensuring that unlicensed teachers applied for and received emergency permits from the Indiana Professional Standards Board. One teacher that began working at the school in December 2004 did not receive her emergency permit until April 2005. The school also had difficulty mastering its accounting system, Komputrol, and ensuring that the chart of accounts was correct. To ensure that accounts were reconciled and correct for the end of the year, CTAS worked with Bookkeeping

Plus, a bookkeeping firm used by many Indiana charter schools, to bring all accounts up to date.

As the year progressed, the school improved its maintenance of the compliance binder, which contains all of the school's governance, management, and organizational documents and is reviewed by the Mayor's Office on a monthly basis, by identifying a specific individual from the school to work with the Mayor's Office. By the end of the school year, the school had brought the compliance binder up to date.

CTAS would benefit from realizing the importance of meeting reporting and compliance requirements (particularly those for regulatory agencies like the IDOE and PERF) and making it a priority in the 2005-06 school year. In order to do this, the school may consider developing better systems that ensure timely and accurate reporting to regulatory agencies.

At the request of the Mayor's Office, the Division of Exceptional Learners at the

IDOE conducts on-site reviews of the special education services provided by Mayor-sponsored charter schools completing their first year of operation. According to Robert Marra, Associate Superintendent of the IDOE in the Division of Exceptional Learners, CTAS “overall is providing appropriate services for its special needs students. Staff members have shown that they are committed to serving all students, including those with disabilities. The areas for attention identified at the school are fully correctable; for example, the school needs to ensure appropriate documentation and procedures for the

Individualized Education Plans as required by law. As well, better and timelier support from the statewide charter school special education cooperative is key.”

Several areas were identified for attention by the expert site team as well. The team noted the small numbers of students identified as having special education needs, and suggested that the school implement an identification and testing procedure for all appropriate students. Consistent with the site team’s findings, “services provided to special needs students” was among the school features rated the lowest by parents and teachers when surveyed.

Parent focus groups, as well as staff and parent survey responses (■ **CHART J**), identified “transportation services” as another potential area for attention. Parents did not view the lack of transportation as a reason not to attend CTAS, but agreed that they and the school needed to work together on identifying additional transportation options (e.g., purchasing a van, working with IndyGo on better routes).

The expert site team recommended that written information about the school’s expectations be developed and distributed to prospective parents and students.

IS THE SCHOOL PROVIDING THE APPROPRIATE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS?

Is the school’s mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?

The expert site visit team found that “all stakeholders know and agree that CTAS is making progress in achieving its mission, which is to provide an early college experience and to have all students college ready four years after entry into CTAS.” However, given the “significant attrition during the first year,” the site team observed that “school efforts should emphasize effectively communicating the culture and demands to prospective families prior to [enrolling in the school].” The team further added that “families who apply should understand that the school provides a rigorous curriculum in order to ensure that all students are college ready.” The site team suggested that the school also consider working with admitted students to sufficiently acculturate them in the necessary attitudes and skills.

When surveyed, 77% of parents at CTAS rated communication about meeting the school’s mission either “excellent” or “very good.” Among staff members, 72% rated communication about meeting the school’s mission either “excellent” or “very good.”

Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?

As ■ **CHART J** illustrates, 88% of CTAS parents and 79% of staff rated the curriculum and academic program as “excellent” or “very good.”

The site visit team noted that some teachers reported a need for additional materials, like textbooks, library books, and materials at different reading levels. The team also suggested that the school consider additional ways to use technology to further improve learning and aid students in developing competencies in technology. When asked to rate the school’s use of computers and other technologies, 72% of parents and 63% of staff at CTAS responded either “excellent” or “very good” (■ **CHART J**).

After observing how students focused on developing “deeper understandings of essential questions,” the site team recommended that the school consider using student portfolios to “document the development and change in student thinking over time.”

Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?

The expert site visit team commended the staff for their use of teacher-designed classroom assignments to understand student learning needs. However, some staff mentioned that additional professional development would be helpful to maximize use of the assessments to design and improve instruction. The site team noted that some staff participated in NWEA training on the use of data to guide student learning, and that additional training in this area might be beneficial.

Because many students enter CTAS significantly below grade level in basic skills, the team suggested that the school might administer baseline assessments in core skills such as reading and mathematics when students first enroll in the school.

When asked how well the school communicates about student learning and assessment, 85% of the parents and 74% of the staff responded “excellent” or “very good” (■ **CHART J**).

Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?

The expert site visit team reported that CTAS “has overall been successful in establishing a climate that is characterized by high expectations, rigor, demand, and effort by all constituents, especially staff and students. Classrooms were orderly, assignments were largely individualized, and students were focused on learning. Observers saw few incidents related to discipline.” The team noted that the school provided an array of extracurricular activities like student government and dance.

The site visit team also heard from staff who mentioned a need for more professional development. Areas identified included differentiating instruction, the Understanding by Design method of course planning, and ways to identify essential questions to guide curriculum learning. Staff survey results underscored this finding, with only 44% of staff rating professional development as “excellent” or “very good” (■ **CHART J**).

The site team commended the school for making significant changes during its first year in operation to improve learning, including: “single gender classes, shortening the passing period to allow time for tutoring at the end of the day, early release on Wednesday to allow time for planning and discussion [for teachers and students], and intensive summer school for a small, select group of 7th grade students to allow more time to complete the Core 40 [diploma

requirements] and be college ready by the time they graduate.”

Survey results showed that opportunities for parental involvement were among the highest rated features at CTAS for both parents and staff, with 91% of parents and 83% of staff members giving an “excellent” or “very good” rating (■ **CHART J**). The site team observed that school personnel should continue their efforts to involve greater numbers of parents in their children’s education.

Nearly 90% of the surveyed parents also rated CTAS “excellent” or “very good” in the areas of school size and student-teacher ratio, with almost 80% similarly rating the school’s facilities. The site team also commended the school’s facility: “the new facility is exemplary in design and is maintained at a very high level of order and cleanliness.”

Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school’s mission?

All constituents agree that the school has set very high expectations for students, parents, and school staff, and that school staff are doing what is necessary to ensure that students “get a better education,” and are “prepared to go to college.”

Survey respondents agreed with this assessment. As shown in ■ **CHART J**, eight out of ten parents surveyed rated the quality of teaching and the individualized attention to students as “excellent” or “very good.”

Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?

As shown in ■ **CHART J**, 77% of parents and 72% of staff rated communication on the school’s mission as “excellent” or “very good.” Slightly higher percentages of both parents (85%) and staff (74%) gave similar ratings to communication about student achievement.

The site team found that some teachers reported missing or inadequate information regarding school issues such as staff changes, summer schedules, or plans for the following year; the team recommended that the school identify ways to improve school-to-staff communications.

Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?

In addition to the professional development needs identified by staff, the expert site visit team noted that staff expressed a need for support staff to respond to specific student needs, such as a psychologist/counselor and reading specialists. The team reported concerns about the future financial viability of the school, considering the current high levels of staffing relative to the needs and numbers of students.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

Source: The information below was provided by the school to the Mayor's Office. It is included here to offer the public a more detailed picture of the school's programs and activities.

Mission, philosophy, and educational program

The CTAS's mission, in cooperation with its parents and the community, is to empower high school students – regardless of their past academic performance – to become successful students who graduate with the capacity for college and career opportunities. The school strives to provide an accelerated learning program that intellectually engages, inspires, and spurs academic achievement through a challenging, interactive college preparatory curriculum.

The school is named after the famous African-American minister and gospel composer Charles A. Tindley. Though Tindley was born a slave in Maryland, he taught himself to read and write at a time when education was illegal for blacks. His legacy, including the song “We Shall Overcome,” serves as an inspiration for CTAS.

The school is based on the Accelerated Schools model, where every student is treated as gifted and high expectations are set for all. In place of remedial classes and tracking of students into differing class levels, the 500 schools nationwide using the Accelerated Schools approach offer enriched instructional programs to all students. The design also requires a collaborative governance model, involving shared decision-making by groups of administrators, parents, teachers, community representatives and students. CTAS is the first school to adopt the Accelerated Schools model in Indianapolis, and one of only five schools nationwide selected to pilot the Accelerated Schools model at the high school level.

CTAS adapted the accelerated approach to the high school experience by offering a single-track college preparatory program, beginning in 8th grade, during which students take classes covering 9th grade content. In future years 9th and 10th grade students will take accelerated college preparatory courses, and 11th and 12th grade students will take college-level

courses that count for both high school and college credit. The school uses a variety of teaching approaches to prepare all students for college, including a culturally relevant curriculum, learning applied to real-world settings, and powerful teaching strategies typically used in gifted and talented programs. The school is structured to help students succeed, featuring class sizes of no more than 20 students and 80 or fewer students per grade. Core courses are taught in ninety-minute class periods, with a longer school day than average (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.), and an extended school year of 200 days.

Academic programs and initiatives

- **Trimester Schedule.** The school operates on a trimester schedule, with each session lasting thirteen weeks. The longer class periods and school days allow teachers to cover the material of a typical eighteen-week semester during the shorter trimester. Students complete the equivalent of one year's coursework in the first two trimesters alone. The third semester is used to teach advanced material, as well as to provide an extended opportunity for students to finish any incomplete courses from prior trimesters.
- **Single Gender Classes.** A few months into the initial school year, the faculty found that students were highly distracted by male-female interactions. As a result, the school shifted to single-gender academic classes to provide students with greater opportunities to focus on learning. Upon visiting an 8th grade algebra class at CTAS, an independent researcher working for the Gates Foundation noted that she had never seen so many female students who were unafraid to participate, debate, discuss, and question openly in a math class.
- **Mandatory Study Hall and Tutoring.** Beginning at 4:00 p.m. each day, students attend a mandatory one-

hour study hall and tutorial session. During this time, students complete any outstanding homework or class assignments, and those who need additional help meet with teachers. As

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

Students and faculty organized a day-long event devoted to African-American history by creating the CTAS Living Museum. More than 75% of the student body participated in this voluntary event, which involved designing exhibits of historical figures such as writers, religious leaders, musicians, or athletes. Other exhibits depicted the arrival of slaves to America, the civil rights era, and characters from Alice Walker's book *The Color Purple*. Each student studied his or her character to create realistic costumes. Parents, faculty, and community members collected additional props that were used to create stages and sets for the museum. The CTAS Living Museum was open to the public for eight hours, with students holding their poses for an hour at a time. By the end of the day more than 400 people visited the museum, including an entire pre-school. The school produced a CD-ROM of photographs of the museum, and students have been asked to recreate some of the characters for another event.

an incentive for academic performance, students who carry an 85% average or higher in all of their classes are allowed to skip the study hall and leave school early.

- **Community of Leaders.** For the entire afternoon every Wednesday, all students participate in the Community of Leaders program, featuring leadership development, civic engagement, service learning, and career exploration activities.
- **Conceptual Physics in 8th Grade.** All 8th grade students at CTAS are enrolled in a Conceptual Physics course

(using a 9th grade curriculum) that emphasizes exploration of the scientific process. The school teaches Physics first in the high school science sequence to engage more students in science at a younger age, and to ensure that all high school students complete at least three years of science as required for a Core 40 Diploma. This reversal of the traditional science sequence is based on the National Science Education Standards that emphasize early scientific inquiry and experimentation (more easily accomplished in physics), as well as on a recognition that modern biology and chemistry topics require greater knowledge of physical processes than in the past.

Parent involvement

- **School as a Whole Committee.** Parents are active members of the “School as a Whole (SAW) Committee,” which advises the school’s leadership and Board of Directors on the school’s educational program and continuous improvement efforts. Parents serve on the SAW Committee alongside faculty, involved community members, and students. The SAW Committee meets monthly, providing all members of the school community with an opportunity to monitor how the mission of the school is being carried out.
- **Weekly Progress Reports.** The school sends home weekly progress reports to parents and guardians; reports must be signed and brought back to school by all students.
- **Family Volunteers.** Parents and guardians sign a “Family Resolution,” committing to fifty hours of service to the school per year. Many volunteer parents, grandparents, and other family members serve as monitors to help during school breakfasts, during the school day, and after school. In 2004-05 parent volunteers set up the school’s paper recycling program, organized a drill team, conducted public relations for the school, participated in school fundraising efforts, chaperoned class trips, and helped connect students and faculty to community programs.

Supplemental programs and activities

- **Physical Education, Arts, and Health.** For the first trimester, all students take physical education classes twice per week. Physical education is an optional elective during the second trimester, along with visual art, choral music, and dance. During the third trimester, all students take a health education class.
- **Athletics.** The school offered after-school intramural basketball and track teams in 2004-05, in anticipation of competing as part of the Indiana High School Athletic Association in 2005-06. Four co-ed basketball teams competed against each other and held a culminating tournament in the spring. An “all-star” team competed against a team from the 21st Century Charter School. The track team trained in the spring and competed in a track and field day held at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis for students from all Indianapolis charter schools.
- **After School Clubs.** Students founded a number of extracurricular clubs, such as a gospel choir, debate society, drill team, dance squad, drum-line, American Sign Language club, and math team.
- **Student Council.** The school’s Student Council organized social activities throughout the year, including two dances, a spirit week, a talent show, and a fashion show. The Council also organized a car wash and other fundraising activities for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.
- **Student Government.** Early in the school year, each grade elects four class officers to serve in Student Government, along with a President elected by all grades. The Student Government meets weekly, and advises the school’s leadership on policies such as the caliber of classes, length of the school day, dress code, special privileges, bell schedule, and calendar.

Community partnerships and donations

- **Facility Financing and Acquisition.** The school’s immediate neighbor, the

Health and Hospitals Corporation of Marion County, provided a loan guarantee for CTAS to acquire and convert an abandoned grocery store into a school. The school’s leaders also received real estate advice and

MOCK LEGISLATURE

A number of 9th grade students from CTAS participated in the YMCA’s Youth and Government mock legislature – normally attended by 11th and 12th grade students. During this program students from around Indiana hold mock legislative sessions at the General Assembly. Students role-play as legislators, meeting in the official statehouse legislative chambers. Students prepare, write, and seek passage of their own legislation on real subjects, many of which are similar to those currently being debated by the General Assembly. For example, one CTAS student wrote a bill proposing changes to the driving practices allowable under Learner’s Permits. Four bills written by CTAS students passed both the mock House and Senate. Because of their skills in debating, one CTAS student was elected the Speaker of the House for next year’s session and a second was elected Lieutenant Governor. Two CTAS students were selected to participate in the national YMCA program this summer.

technical support from the United Northeast Community Development Corporation. Members of the law firm Baker & Daniels provided pro bono legal assistance, advising on contracts for facility financing, acquisition, and construction.

- **Music Programs.** College music majors from Butler University’s Community Arts Program give private music lessons on-site weekly to students in piano, percussion, and strings. Meridian Music donated ten electric pianos for the music program.
- **Marketing and Public Relations.** Infinite Marketing provides pro bono marketing and public relations services to increase awareness of the new school and encourage enrollment by the target student population. The

company drafted a communications plan for the school, created the sports logo and other school graphics, designed a new website for the school, and arranges for the media to cover school events.

- **Fundraising Campaign.** The school has raised over \$1.5 million in grants and donations to date including from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (through the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis), the Walton Family Foundation, the Nicholas H. Noyes Jr. Foundation, the Central Indiana Community Foundation, and the Challenge Foundation.

Staffing

- **Weekly Professional Development.** Classes are dismissed Wednesday afternoons for students to participate in Community of Leaders activities. The school's faculty uses this time for professional development activities such as formal presentations and discussions, teacher reflection and action research, and inquiries into classroom practices. The school also emphasizes continuous and sustained improvement in teaching practices, encouraging faculty to participate in regular peer observation and dialogue.
- **Summer Teaching Institute.** Prior to opening last fall, the school brought the entire faculty and administrative leadership together for six weeks of professional development. The school intends to hold additional Teaching Institutes every summer for new staff, and to provide for continued growth opportunities for returning staff. Last summer's Teaching Institute covered a number of topics, including powerful teaching practices for accelerating learning; problem-based learning; culturally responsive pedagogy; teaching reading and writing across all subject areas; learning through inquiry; and continuous school improvement.
- **Instructional Coaching.** The school has two instructional coaches on staff who work with teachers on curriculum

planning, the use of powerful teaching practices, and analysis of student data.

- **Accelerated School Network.** As one of over 500 schools nationwide adopting the Accelerated Schools model, CTAS receives on- and off-site professional development, coaching, materials, and networking opportunities through the National Center for Accelerated Schools PLUS. The National Center selected CTAS, along with only four other schools, to pilot the Accelerated Schools model at the high school level. The five pilot high schools receive additional advice, coaching, and mentoring from the National Center.

School management

The Principal and CEO, Marcus Robinson, oversees the daily operations of the school and hires and manages all staff. Mr. Robinson provides leadership to all personnel in implementing the school's curriculum and student development activities. The Chief Financial Officer and Dean of Students, Patrick Terry, oversees the school's business operations and student discipline. The Director of Curriculum, Siri Ann Loescher, is responsible for professional development, staff evaluation, and supporting teachers in accelerated teaching strategies and student assessment. The Director of Early College, Dina Stephens, provides instructional coaching to staff, ensures course content is aligned with college preparatory standards, and oversees the school's effort to partner with a post-secondary institution to provide college-level classes and experiences for the students.

School governance

The CTAS Board of Directors sets operating and educational program policies, approves and monitors the annual budget and financial procedures, conducts fundraising, and evaluates the Principal/CEO. Members of the Board of Directors were integrally involved in start-up activities prior to the school's opening, including conducting community outreach, directing fundraising efforts, and recruiting and hiring the Principal/CEO. This spring,

the Board conducted an assessment of the school's first year of operations by interviewing over 30 faculty and parents. The assessment included topics such as school operations, academics, student life, communications, facilities, and leadership. The current Board members bring a range of expertise to the school, including: internship programs, community development, education research, college admissions, alternative education, human resources, finance and accounting, business management, marketing, and legal matters.

Facilities

CTAS is located in the Meadows neighborhood on the northeast side of Indianapolis. The school purchased and renovated a vacant supermarket, adapting the abandoned structure for a new use and contributing to the redevelopment of the neighborhood. Three-quarters of the 74,000 square-foot facility has been renovated for the school; the new configuration includes twenty classrooms, five science laboratories, a cafeteria, and a gymnasium with a regulation-size basketball court. The school features advanced technology with LCD projectors in each classroom, a 2:1 student to computer ratio, a tablet computer for each teacher, and wireless networking throughout the building.

Planned improvements for the upcoming school year

- **Competitive Athletics Teams.** The school has applied to join the Indiana High School Athletic Association and will begin fielding competitive athletics teams in 2005-06.
- **Early College.** An articulation agreement is being negotiated with an accredited university that will provide college classes and college experiences for 11th and 12th grade students. Students who successfully complete these dual-enrollment classes will receive both high school and college credit, allowing students the opportunity to graduate high school with up to two years of portable college credit.